

January 15, 2003

Public Notice for Section 401 Water Quality Certification  
California Department of Transportation  
Manzanita Passing Lane Project  
WDID No. 1A02199WNTR

Trinity County

On December 9, 2002, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the California Department of Transportation (CDOT) requesting Federal Clean Water Act, Section 401, Water Quality Certification for the Manzanita Passing Lane Project in Trinity County, California. The proposed project causes disturbances to waters of the United States associated with the Trinity River in Burnt Ranch Hydrologic Subarea No. 106.13.

The proposed project is located on State Route (SR) 299 in Trinity County between Post Mile (PM) 29.4/30.2, near Big Bar, California. State Route 299 runs along a south-facing slope parallel to the Trinity River, at distances varying from 15 to over 50 meters. The disposal site for all excavated material is located in Big Bar, California.

The proposed project involves construction of an eastbound passing lane and westbound turnout along SR 299 between PM 29.4/30.2. Work will also include upgrading the access and parking lot of the US Forest Service (USFS) Skunk Point Group Camping Area, and the installation or replacement of six culverts within the work area. It is proposed to add a 3.6-meter wide eastbound passing lane 0.8 km in length, a westbound turnout 100 meters in length, and paved shoulders to the existing highway. This will be accomplished by widening the existing pavement 2.4 meters on the south side of the road and 4.8 to 7.2 meters on the north side of the road. An asphalt concrete (AC) overlay of 45 mm to 250mm will be placed over the existing AC pavement. Two large cuts will be made on the north side of the highway to make room for the new passing lane without encroaching on the river. The cuts will be made by blasting, rather than ripping, due to the rocky material. Minor cuts and fills will be used on the south side of the highway in order to widen the shoulders to meet current safety standards, yet avoid impacts to the Trinity River. A low retaining wall, 105 meters in length, will be constructed along the south side of the highway. All work on the retaining wall will take place from the current roadway and shoulder. Graded side gutters, 1.8 to 6.0 meters, will be constructed along the north side of the highway to provide stopping site distance, rock fall area, and drainage.

The project will also require the replacement of five existing culverts and the construction of one new culvert. Drainage system 1 involves the replacement of two as-built corrugated metal pipe culverts (CMP) with a new 600-mm corrugated steel pipe (CSP). This system will include a drop inlet with an AC apron and rock slope protection (RSP) at the pipe outlet. Drainage systems 2, 3, and 5 involve replacing existing 450-mm CMPs with 600-mm CSPs. These drainages will include an AC apron and RSP at the pipe outlet. Drainage system 4 involves replacing the existing 600-mm CMP culvert with a 750-mm CSP, a drop inlet with an AC apron, a pipe headwall inlet for the existing channel flow, and RSP at the pipe outlet. Sediment will be removed from this drainage to increase channel capacity. At drainage system 6, a new 300-mm CMP culvert will be added under the new driveway at USFS Skunk Point Group Camping Area.

The project also involves upgrading the existing USFS Skunk Point Group Camping Area parking lot and driveways. CDOT will close both existing driveways and construct a single driveway between them. The parking area will be enlarged and striped for greater capacity and

to allow a larger area for vehicles to turn around. The AC from the existing driveways will be removed and native trees and shrubs will be planted across the old entrance to prevent vehicle access. Additionally, a berm will be constructed and planted with low growing native shrubs to screen the campground from the highway.

The project will generate an excess of 28,000 cubic meters excavated material from the cuts on the north side of SR 299. This material will be disposed on Forest Service land located in the town of Big Bar, California. Excess material will be compacted and contoured, and Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented to prevent erosion.

The project will not cause permanent impacts to wetlands. Approximately 0.5 acre will be temporarily impacted by the project. The Conservation Measures outlined in the Biological Evaluation will be implemented as part of the project to minimize and/or avoid impacts to the Trinity River.

Compensatory mitigation for this project will not be required. Noncompensatory mitigation measures include the use of BMPs, such as straw bales or silt fencing, to prevent fine sediment from reaching the Trinity River. All work will be completed during the summer low-flow period, June 1 to October 15. All work will be completed outside the wetted channel and above the ordinary high water mark. Removal of existing vegetation will not exceed the minimum necessary to complete operation.

The California Department of Transportation (CDOT), as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, will file a Notice of Exemption upon receipt of the National Marine Fisheries Service concurrence with the Biological Evaluation for this project.

The CDOT - Manzanita Passing Lane Project is scheduled to begin in June 2003 and end October 15, 2003. Staff is proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341). In addition, staff will consider all comments received during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter. If you have any questions or comments, please contact staff member Roy O'Connor at (707) 576-2670, or at [roconnor@rbl.swrcb.ca.gov](mailto:roconnor@rbl.swrcb.ca.gov) within 21 days of the posting of this notice.